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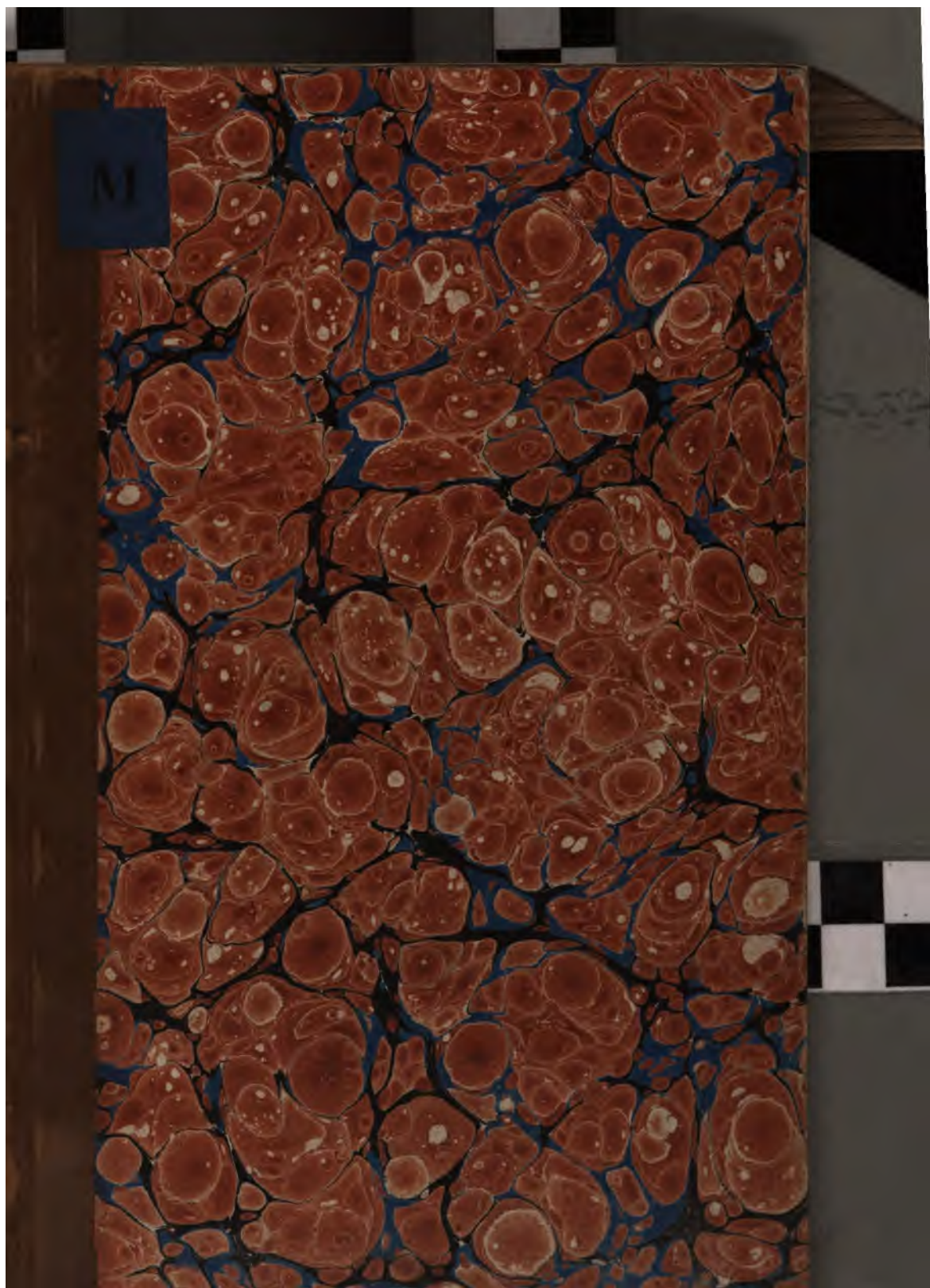
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THE THIRTY-NINE ARTICLES

OF THE

CHURCH OF ENGLAND.

THE ELEVENTH OF
THE PUBLIC COURSE OF LECTURES,
IN TRINITY TERM,
READ BEFORE THE UNIVERSITY,
IN THE DIVINITY SCHOOL, OXFORD, JUNE 1, 1842.

BY

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CANON OF CHRIST CHURCH.

SECOND EDITION.

LONDON:
B. FELLOWES, LUDGATE STREET.
1842.

956.



**This Lecture was not composed for publication ;
but has been sent to the Press, at a very short notice,
at the particular request of several persons who
heard it.**

Ch. Ch. June 4, 1842.

LECTURE XI.

AND now that we may be supposed to have gone through the several studies indicated in our analysis—to have satisfied ourselves as to the canon of Scripture, the genuine text, the laws of interpretation, the authenticity and credibility of the volume of Scripture and its doctrines, and the confirmation of the truth to be obtained from ecclesiastical history,—including under that study an acquaintance with the patristic remains, and all the documents and institutions of the Church,—we may proceed in due order to that which may properly be called the business of Exposition, as distinct from the Investigation of Sacred Truth, and as it is a superstructure to be raised upon it.

The business of Exposition will be found to consist of two parts:—1st, That of drawing forth the doctrines of our religion into the several particulars into which they are branched; stating them correctly; and giving them their relative place and due importance in the scheme of religion. 2nd, That of applying them to the instruction and edification of the Church. The first consideration would be briefly expressed by the term *Systematic Theology*; the second, by the term *Practical Theology*. The first will form the subject of this day's Lecture; the

second, that of to-morrow's, and the conclusion of the present Course.

I remarked at the beginning of these Lectures, that in collecting the information of Scripture we were necessarily led—led, that is, by the constitution of our minds—to form a System of theology. In the Bible itself we have narrative, doctrine, and precept interspersed with each other; and when we come to study the Bible, we naturally proceed to distribute the particulars belonging to each into their respective heads, and then further to arrange these several particulars in their due order and place in each department. Thus we have Scripture-histories, giving the events recorded in Scripture, detached from the other matter, and chronologically arranged. We have treatises of Christian ethics, and selections of Christian precepts; and we have also summaries of Christian doctrine,—Creeds, and Articles of religion. It is to these last, in the most proper sense, that the term Systematic Theology applies, since these undertake to state the truths of religion as such; and they comprise accordingly the Science of theology. This department also obtains the name of Dogmatic Theology; but this appellation denotes rather the several formal propositions of which our theological System consists than the whole sum of them, which is what we mean when we speak of Systematic Theology.

I assumed the truth, you will remember, at the outset, of our Creeds and Articles, in order to cha-

racterize our Theology, amidst the various discordant views which might be taken of the subject; that we might, in fact, enter on our business in the spirit of Church-of-England theologians. Our received formularies referred us to the Scriptures as the object of our study in the search after divine knowledge; and we have accordingly been engaged in exploring the Scriptures, examining into their divine character, and acquainting ourselves with their contents. We have now to ascertain the character of our guide—to shew that it is faithful and true to those Scriptures to which it conducts us—not encroaching on the prerogative of Scripture, nor inconsistently enunciating any other doctrines for divine, except what are found in the volume itself of Scripture. We shall thus establish at once their truth and importance—their truth, as being scriptural; their importance, as helping us to a right collection and understanding and keeping of Scripture-truths.

Articles of Religion appear to differ from Creeds in this respect, that they are designed principally for teachers of the faith, whereas Creeds are designed for the body of believers at large. Both are Confessions of the Faith. Both are summaries of what is to be believed. But while the Creeds enable the believer to know and profess summarily the great doctrines of revelation, Articles provide him with an accurate enunciation of them, and enable him, as by an outline, to define them with precision, distinguishing

them from similar or erroneous views of the same points, and thus to maintain a consistent body of truth. Every believer indeed, hearer as well as teacher, may thus apply a system of Articles to his own edification in the faith. But this office of Articles is clearly of primary and direct importance to the teacher, as it is indispensable that the doctrinal statements of the teachers of the Church should all speak one language, that language carefully guarded from error; and that amidst the diversity of expositions they should know clearly, by the public voice of the Church, what they are required to teach.

Creeds, as the more indispensable, since it concerns every Christian to know what he is called upon to believe, at his very entrance into the Christian faith, and to make some profession of it in order to his baptism, naturally come in the history of Systematic Theology before Articles. Creeds, accordingly, appear to have existed from the earliest times of the preaching of the Gospel. The Apostles' Creed, for example, though there is no evidence to prove its being the work of the Apostles, undoubtedly descends to us from apostolical times. There would be little occasion *comparatively* for Articles of Religion in the primitive ages, when the teachers of the Gospel had the teaching of their Lord and His Apostles as yet sounding in their ears; and whilst the Church *at large*, however divided in place or time, remained, with some partial exceptions, uncorrupted. Errors

indeed there were, and gross errors, of *doctrine*, accompanying the first propagation of the Gospel. But those errors had not at first infected the catholic body of the Church, so as to call for the remedy of formal Articles of religion, until the time of the Council of Nicæa, in A.D. 325. For the first Council of the Apostles and Elders and the whole Church at Jerusalem was directed rather to the preservation of liberty and peace in the Church, than to the inculcation of doctrine; enjoining as it did the refraining from imposing any burthen on Christians, beyond abstinence from "meats offered to idols, and from blood, and from things strangled, and from fornication;" and of the like nature, for the most part, were the subsequent provincial Councils antecedent to that of Nicæa.

The Decrees of Councils, accordingly, in the early ages, occupied the place of Articles of Religion. They were decisions of points of doctrine, for the instruction of the whole Church, called forth from time to time, by peculiar needs, by the rise of errors, affecting this or that doctrine of the Faith; having immediately in view, as we may observe, the teachers in the Church, and the doctrine to be taught by them. Thus the Council of Nicæa condemned the Arian teachers, and their doctrine, and set forth the true Faith, according to the Scriptures, as that which alone should be professed and taught in the Church. The second General Council, that of Con-

stantinople, in 380, condemning the doctrine of Macedonius, asserted the divinity of the Holy Spirit, and gave additional sanction to what had been previously established at Nicæa.

The third General Council, that of Ephesus, in A. D. 431,—condemning the errors of Nestorius, who denied the hypostatical union of the divine and human natures in Christ; and of Pelagius and Celestius, denying the doctrine of original sin,—ruled authoritatively what should be held and taught in the Church on these points. And the fourth General Council, that of Chalcedon, A. D. 451, whilst it also condemned the Nestorian doctrine of a division of Persons in Christ, condemned the contrary error propagated by Eutyches, that of the *confusion* of the Godhead and manhood of Christ in one Person, and thus set forth to the Christian world what should be received and taught as sound doctrine on this head. And so, last of all, the case of the Council of Trent, A. D. 1545—1563, is an illustration of the same fact. It was a teaching in counteraction of the teaching of the leaders of the Reformation. The system of doctrine and worship in the Churches under the authority of the Pope had been so assailed by the spirit of reformation, and every expedient to restore uniformity had so entirely failed, that it became necessary to restate and formally promulgate the doctrines which should be held by the members of the Roman communion, and give its ministers an au-

thentic manual of the system which they should teach. At the same period, it may be observed, Pope Pius IV. (in 1564) set forth that Creed which passes by his name, or *Professio Fidei Tridentinæ*, as a standard of belief for the members at large of the Church—that consummation of apostacy from the simple Gospel, substituting belief in the teachers of the Church for belief in the Word of God.

The rise of what are more properly called Articles of Religion, or Confessions of Faith, such as our Thirty-nine Articles, may be referred to the occasions which arose at the commencement of the Reformation, for asserting and maintaining sound doctrine against the errors of Rome. The early Reformers were called upon by others, and were themselves anxious to shew that they held the fundamental Articles of the Christian Faith; that they claimed a liberty from the power and superstition of the Church of Rome on no other grounds but such as might well be conceded to sober-minded Christian men. For the sake too of their own followers, it was necessary to draw up a formulary of doctrine, lest there should be any doubt as to what the reformation in hand was tending; that men's minds might not be unsettled generally, but might have something definite to hold to—might be guarded on all the great saving truths of the Gospel. Such, accordingly, was the character of the first Confession of Faith put forth by the Reformers in Germany—the celebrated Confession of

Augsburgh, in A.D. 1530. This Confession was drawn up by Melancthon, to be presented at the Diet of Augsburgh by those princes of the Germanic empire who had, only the year before, by their public remonstrance against the decree of the Diet of Spire, which revoked every concession before made to them in the matter of religion, established the glorious name of Protestant as a rallying point to the Christian world against the corruptions of Rome. Charles the Fifth, aroused by this strenuous remonstrance of the Protestant princes, and finding his efforts ineffectual to prevail on the Pope, Clement VII., to call a General Council for the settlement of religion, determined on the endeavour to arbitrate in the disputes by his own authority at the Diet to be held at Augsburgh. Hitherto there was no *formula* of the doctrines professed by the Reformers. There had been only some statements of their views proposed by Luther in a document consisting of seventeen articles, at one of the conventions of the Protestant princes in the previous year, 1529. This served as the basis on which Melancthon, by the order and authority of the Elector of Saxony and the other princes, drew up the Augsburgh Confession in its present form.

The tenor of this celebrated Confession of Faith marks the occasion of it. It consists of twenty-eight articles—of which the first twenty-one relate to matters of faith, and are strictly didactic; the remaining

seven are protests against the abuses of doctrine and practice introduced in the Church of Rome. Thus did it furnish those who were engaged in the great work of the Reformation, whether as teachers or hearers, with sound and stable principles of doctrine, and guard them from wild and heretical innovations on the faith; whilst, at the same time, it gave a steadiness of aim and of proceeding to the Reformers, and a warning to the supporters of the corruptions of Rome, by pointing out the errors and abuses against which they protested.

The Confession of Augsburg is peculiarly important and interesting to us, not only as the first authoritative document of the faith of the Reformers, and as attesting accordingly the sound Christian spirit and religious moderation in which the work of Reformation, as an act of the Christian Church, was undertaken, (whatever may have been the excesses of individuals,) but as the model from which our own Confession of Faith (our Thirty-nine Articles) was composed.* For not only has the substance of this Confession been embodied in the Thirty-nine Articles, but the very expressions of it have in great measure

* Some of the Articles at the revision in Queen Elizabeth's reign, when Parker was archbishop, were either partly or wholly copied from the Wirtemberg Confession, viz. 2nd, 5th, 6th, 10th, 11th, 12th, and 20th. The Wirtemberg Confession, a compendium and repetition of the Augsburg, was composed in 1551, and in the following year exhibited by the Wirtemberg ambassadors at Trent.—Laurence, Bamp. Lect. p. 243. 332.

been adopted in the Articles. And we know, too, that Melancthon, the author of it, was especially consulted by Cranmer in the carrying on the Reformation in England. Our Articles, too, follow the example of this Confession in the same resoluteness and firmness of doctrinal statement, leaving nothing ambiguous and wavering in regard to the substance of the truths asserted, whilst they use, as that Confession also does, great moderation in regard to the language in which they are asserted. But of this I shall have occasion to say more presently.^b

The Augsburg Confession, however admirably adapted as it was to its purpose, and though it did serve that purpose so far as to be ever afterwards a standard of doctrine to the leading Reformers, was not successful as an instrument of pacification. Nor could it indeed be expected to be so, when it was evident that, in the great movements of those days, the schemes of political rulers, rather than a sincere design for the advancement of the Gospel and the peace of the Church, were the motive principles of events. The Emperor wished on the one hand to restrain the power of the Pope in his dominions, and on the other to weaken that of the princes of the empire; so that we find him alternately listening to

^b The Apology, or Defence of the Confession, was drawn up by the same author as the Confession itself, and at the same period; and has always obtained an equal authority, being enumerated with it among the symbolical books of the Lutherans.—Laurence, Bampton Lectures, p. 262.

the proposals on each side, and trying to effect a compromise between the conflicting parties, so as to establish his own ascendancy over both in the result. We need scarcely wonder therefore that this Confession, wise and temperate as it was, should not have allayed the persecuting spirit, but should rather have been met by a furious opposition, which would listen to no arguments or expostulations. The Reformers, however, continued to support the ground which they had thus taken, by further statements and defences of their doctrines; and a series of documents were the result of these proceedings, which, in their collective form, constitute what are now called the symbolical books of the Lutheran Church. At the same time, the other great section of the Reformers—the Helvetic or Reformed, as they were distinguished by name from the Lutheran, differing from the Lutherans chiefly on the doctrine of the Eucharist—published their Confessions of Faith.

Nor were the formularies proposed by the Reformers the only attempts made to restore uniformity of Christian profession at this period. The Council of Trent had met in 1545, but was soon after broken up,—on the rumour of a pestilence having appeared at Trent,—without proceeding far into the discussions of the controversies which it was designed to settle. But the distracted state of Germany, and the impatience of Charles the Vth, could not brook the delay thus artfully interposed by the Pope, Paul IIIrd.,

in the deliberations of the Council. Accordingly, Charles the Vth, in the year 1548, had that *formula* drawn up, which, from the purpose for which it was set forth,—being intended, as a *temporary* measure, to have force only during the suspension of the Council of Trent,—obtained the name of the Interim. It was sufficiently objectionable to the Pope and the adherents of the established system of the Church, that this paper was put forth by imperial authority,—that it did not emanate from an ecclesiastical source; and that it appeared to substitute another Confession on points which had already been ruled at the first sittings of the Council. It appeared also to favour the Lutherans, inasmuch as it taught the importance of *faith*, and said nothing of the merits or condignity of good works; and asserted the virtue of the Sacraments to be dependent on the faith of the receivers; and tolerated also the marriage of priests, and distribution of the cup to the laity. It was therefore assailed with strong remonstrances on the part of the papists, and with argumentative refutations. Nor did it satisfy the Reformers; since, though it put in a prominent light many doctrines on which they laid great stress,—as, the corruption of human nature, the sole redemption by the blood of Christ, the necessity of faith, and of divine grace throughout, to make man just and holy in the sight of God,—yet it enforced also many gross Romish superstitions. So that though the Emperor, and the theologians whom he

employed, endeavoured to palliate the offence at Rome, by asserting that it was intended for the Lutherans, and not obligatory on the adherents of Rome, the Reformers, with the Elector of Saxony at their head, refused to submit to it. The conciliatory spirit, indeed, of Melancthon induced a partial submission; and some of the cities, which had at first sternly resisted the imposition of the formula, were awed into submission for a time. But the Reformers, on the whole, regarded it only, as it was in truth, an attempt to reconcile them to papal corruptions under a less obnoxious form. The Interim was, in fact, an expedient for paralyzing the efforts of Reformers, by speaking in the tone of the Confession of Augsburg, whilst it breathed the spirit of popery.

And while these efforts towards a restoration of uniformity of doctrine, by the imposition of authoritative formularies, were proceeding in the parent country of the Reformation, the first rude attempts were made in our own country towards the formation of a standard of doctrine. In 1536, Henry the Eighth, with the advice of Cranmer, published a set of Articles, or short code of Doctrine, in which the fundamental truths of religion were set forth, but with them also the doctrine of transubstantiation, though not under that name. For Cranmer, even long after he appeared as a reformer of religion, held to this grievous error, so obstinately indeed as to persecute to death those who

denied it. It was only late in his career of reform, and by conference with Ridley, whose learning led him to the reading of the work of Ratramn, (a work composed in the ninth century, against the Romanist doctrine,) that he was brought to the renunciation of the error. Still these Articles, though far from a faithful protest against the corruptions of Rome, were of some service towards a future more effectual reform. There was no mention of four of the reputed seven sacraments of Rome. And though the doctrine of purgatory was asserted, it was separated from some of the gross abuses with which it had been associated. Both the place and the nature of the pains of purgatory were spoken of as doubtful; and the unprofitableness of the pardons from the Pope, and of masses for the souls of the dead, was significantly intimated. Then there was no reference to the authority of Tradition or of the Church in controversies of faith, but only to the Bible and the three Creeds as standards of doctrine. And all *immediate* worship of saints and of images was removed.*

These Articles exactly correspond with that idea which I have given of the nature of such formularies in general, as intended primarily for the *teachers* of religion. They were throughout directions to the "bishops and preachers" as to what they were to teach the people. They follow, we find, the Confes-

* See Burnet's Reformation, vol. i. p. 456.

sion of Ausburgh by six years; and they indicate a considerable impression already made in this country by the religious spirit of the Reformation. For the Articles refer to matter of Christian doctrine and practice. And I speak of the religious spirit of the Reformation in this country, as distinct from the secular efforts of Henry the Eighth to emancipate himself and the administration of religion in England from the papal dominion, which indirectly tended to the reform of religion.

These Articles of 1536 clearly prepared the way for those which followed, though at a considerable interval,—the forty-two Articles of Edward the Sixth's reign, passed in the year 1552. During, indeed, the eleven years which intervened between the Articles of 1536 and Henry's death in 1547, other measures were taken towards reform, as by an authorized translation of the Bible in 1539, and by the publication of the two treatises—"The Institution of a Christian Man," in 1537, and "A necessary Doctrine and Eru-dition for any Christian Man," in 1543. But at the same time there was a strong re-action of the spirit of popery; as was testified by the tumultuary insurrection in the north of England, in 1536 and the following year; and in particular by the tyrannical and bloody "Act of the Six Articles," in 1539, which inflicted death on the denial of transubstantiation, and on all who should assert the necessity of communicating in both kinds, and on all again who should deny the Divine

prohibition of the marriage of the clergy, and the Divine sanction of monastic vows, or who impugned private masses and auricular confession. Then the first years of Edward's reign were employed in active exertions to stop the idolatrous practices and superstitions among the people; in the preparation of homilies and a reformed liturgy. These great and most necessary measures of reform having been completed, the forty-two Articles of 1552 were at length published, as a standard of doctrine for the clergy. The Council of Trent had then framed its decrees respecting Justification, and Baptism, and the Eucharist, and Penance, and Extreme Unction, and the Scriptures, and Tradition.

These Articles accordingly came out very appropriately at this time, to protest against the errors on these subjects, to which the Council had just given its sanction, and to establish a sound form of doctrine throughout the country. In substance and expression they are, for the most part, the same as our present standard, the Articles promulgated eleven years afterwards, (in 1563,) in the reign of Elizabeth; and again a second time, with some revisions of the language, in 1571: the three additional Articles (the 39th, on the Resurrection of the Dead, asserting the Resurrection to be not yet past—the 41st, against the supporters of the millenium—the 42nd, against the doctrine of Origen respecting the final salvation of all men) having been retrenched as unnecessary.

The Church of England standard of doctrine may thus be justly regarded as the matured wisdom of the Church itself in its efforts of reformation. For it appears, that our Thirty-nine Articles were not suddenly framed and adopted on the pressure of the moment, as were the decrees of the Council of Trent, but were the result of a slow and deliberate proceeding on the part of the Church; having been finally approved and sanctioned in their present form, not by those only who originally framed them, but by other persons in authority in the Church, at the distance of nearly twenty years. The Council of Trent, too, had at this latter period finally closed its sittings and put forth its decrees. So that our Thirty-nine Articles, as re-affirmed in 1571, may be regarded with truth as protests against the corruptions of doctrine maintained throughout that Council, no less than against those particular errors which had already obtained its sanction when the Articles were first composed. Thus, in treating of the Article on Purgatory, Bishop Burnet notices the variation of language in the Article as re-published in Elizabeth's reign from what it had been in Edward's reign. It speaks of the *Romish*

* The Articles were originally composed in Latin; "nor were they ever subscribed in English until the Convocation of 1571. Previously to that year, the English editions materially varied, while the Latin (errors of the press excepted) remained the same, unless where alterations were introduced by authority."—Laurence's Bampton Lectures, p. 336.

doctrine, whereas before it had been the doctrine of *schoolmen*. "The plain reason of this is," he says, "that these errors were not so fully espoused by the body of the Roman Church, when those Articles were first published; so that some writers that softened matters threw them upon the schoolmen; and therefore the Article was cautiously worded in laying them there. But before these that we have now were published, the Decree and Canon concerning the Mass had passed at Trent, in which most of the heads of this Article are either affirmed or supposed; though the formal Decree concerning them was made some months after these Articles were published." And in discussing this Article he examines it as being the established doctrine of the whole Roman Church. This sufficiently shews, that the Articles against the corruptions of Rome were not against mere floating traditionary errors in that Church, but against the formal adoption of those corruptions by the Church of Rome in the Council of Trent.

Articles so framed, and so left to the Church, cannot be lightly esteemed. It is a disparagement of the wisdom and authority of those by whom they were bequeathed to us as a legacy of sound doctrine, to endeavour to set them aside or explain them away in any manner. Honestly and reverently to deal with them, we must either accept them or reject them, according to their plain meaning: reject them, if

we can disprove them—which it will be a hard task for any sincere searcher into Scripture to do; accept them—as I think, on the other hand, every sincere inquirer into Scripture must do—if they are in accordance with the teaching of the word. We should observe, indeed, the same moderation which they do. As we should not relax them in any way, neither should we strain them beyond their manifest intention. We are not, in short, to bring in any extrinsic principles to their interpretation, but to interpret them simply by what they say in themselves, together with any illustration that may be drawn from their history and the controversies against which they were directed.

It is most necessary indeed to a just interpretation of the Articles, that we should rightly conceive the nature of that moderation in which they have been framed. That moderation does not consist in the latitude of various interpretations which they may be supposed to admit, but in their evident comprehensiveness; in the breadth of their teaching; in what they expressly include and state:—not in any reservation, or tacit meanings left open to each man's private judgment, to suggest or supply as he may think proper. The Council of Trent has couched its decisions in ambiguous phraseology, so as to leave an opening to discordant opinions, amidst an external uniformity of statement. Not so, however, the compilers of our Articles. Melancthon, whose opinions

and feelings seem throughout to have guided their proceedings, was especially adverse to any such dissingenuousness, any such artificial method of uniting dissentients in the profession of a common formula. He declared that, according to his judgment, every thing in theology should be expressed without ambiguity; that things should be called by their proper names; and thus that perfect simplicity should be aimed at in drawing up a Confession of Faith. We cannot suppose therefore that our Reformers had it in contemplation to say one thing in their own sense, and mean another thing in the sense of another person. They cannot, for instance, be supposed to have written down expressions on the subject of the Divine Predestination adverse to the extreme Calvinistic view, and yet to have so framed them as to enable the Calvinist to explain them in his own sense. Nor, on the other hand, can they be supposed so to have declared themselves against the extreme Arminian views of the same subject, as to have designedly allowed a refuge to the Arminian under the *ambiguity* of the terms.

But what persons would do, who desired to moderate between opposing parties, neither of whom they might judge to be unworthy, on account of their opinions, to be excluded from the communion of the Church, would be openly and unreservedly to propose a scheme of comprehension—to admit in a moderate, candid, and simple sense the opinion of

each party, and thus include each expressly within the terms of the formulary.

And this our Reformers appear to have done, in treating of the subjects of Predestination and Free-will. Following Scripture, they have neither so asserted the Divine Predestination as to exclude the doctrine of Free-will, nor so spoken of the Free-will of man as to extenuate the truth of Divine Predestination. Both parties, accordingly, if they be only moderate in their views of each doctrine, and not disposed to push their respective opinions to the extreme of the logical consequences from them, so as to exclude the opposite, may find their opinions expressed in the Articles. The doctrine of the Divine Predestination is strongly asserted in the Articles, free from its objectionable consequences; as is also the doctrine of Free-will. For it is not denied on this point that man has a free-will, but only that this will is not able of itself to do any thing pleasing to God—not that the will of man is in bondage, (as Luther in one of his controversial treatises boldly attempted to prove,) but only that God must be the first mover of the will and constant cooperator with it; which is perfectly consistent with the Divine Predestination and with the freedom of man, though we cannot explain *how* the two principles are combined in operation.

Again; though Faith is described in the Articles as that which alone justifies the sinner; this is not so asserted as to enable the Solifidian or Antinomian

to subscribe the Articles: for whilst good works of every kind are thereby excluded from meriting remission of sins and acceptance with God for *their own sake*, yet are good works further spoken of as pleasing and acceptable to God *in Christ, per Christum*, and as not the less necessary because they are not *meritorious*—necessary, in fact, as the necessary fruits of a lively faith in Christ. Hence both those who are disposed to dwell on the fulness of God's promises in Christ, and the abundant efficacy of His grace in justifying the sinner,—and those, on the other hand, who dwell on the calls to holiness by the Gospel, and the rewards and punishments with which that holiness is enforced, and the acts of dutiful obedience to God's commandments due for His great love towards us in Christ,—may find their views fully expressed in the combined statements of the Articles.

Again; will any one believe that the sixth Article, on the Sufficiency of Holy Scripture for Salvation, has been so worded as to admit the opposite opinion of its Insufficiency? It does not indeed expressly say, that Tradition is not to be received as a source of doctrine, or part of the rule of faith; but it surely very evidently excludes those who say that Scripture and Tradition are the *joint* rule of faith, not only by its silence about Tradition, but by speaking of Scripture alone, in stating the source and authority for doctrine necessary to salvation.

Or when the Articles assert that the Bishop of Rome hath no jurisdiction in this realm of England, can we suppose, with any plausibility, that they may be subscribed by those who hold, as the Romanists do, that the Pope *ought* to have jurisdiction in England, and only own the evident matter of fact that he has not? Or that when the Articles exclude the belief in the expiatory virtue of masses for the quick and dead as blasphemous, they are indulgent towards a belief in the mass in general as a propitiatory sacrifice.

Such, I feel sure, is not the *moderation* of the Church in its Articles. It is rather, as appears from the instances before stated, a moderation of express statements on controverted points—an unreserved candour towards contending views—not an apparent favouring of one side whilst another is tacitly supported—not an apparent denial of doctrines which they do not really oppose—but an open confessed acknowledgment of the truth on each controverted point, on whichever side it might be found.

There is a caution, too, to be observed in estimating this moderation, which it may be well to notice. You may be apt to suppose that it consists in preserving an equal distance from certain opposite extremes, or that in all cases of controversy a *via media* is necessarily the right one. A moderation of this kind would result rather in a general latitudinarianism, than in a proper maintenance of the truth. For

there are cases where what might be called the extreme view is the right one,—as in the doctrine of the perfect Divinity of our Lord, compared with the low Socinian view of His sole humanity, and the intermediate Arian hypothesis of His angelic nature. To take another instance. The true doctrine of Sacramental grace is not a middle point between the Romanist theory of the *opus operatum*, and the theory, on the other hand, which reduces the Sacraments to mere signs ; for it would then be something less than the *opus operatum*, and something more than the outward sign ; but the true doctrine transcends them both. It places not the virtue of the Sacrament in any thing done by man—in any outward element or form of words, or ritual—but in the *promises* of God attending the due administration and reception of it, according to the institution of Christ ; and thus derives its virtue from a far higher, holier, and more unfailing source than the doctrine of the *opus operatum* ; and in this respect, as compared with that doctrine, is an extreme. To take another instance. The Church of England doctrine of the Sufficiency of Scripture is not a medium between an extreme of the undue exaltation of Scripture—for we cannot put the value and importance of Scripture too high—and those views of it which either place it on a level with the traditions of the Church, (as those of the Romanists,) or assimilate it to the writings of uninspired men, (as those of the Socinians ;) but it is an ultimate

point beyond these. We maintain the Scripture in our Articles to be all-sufficient; we do not balance between a reverence to Scripture and a reverence to other authorities, but we ascribe an exclusive sanctity to Scripture, and reject every other authority, as divine and conclusive in the matter of divine truth.

The moderation of the Church, accordingly, is to be estimated from its candid pursuit of the truth in every question. And we must not invert the case and say that it has attained the truth because it has sought a middle way. Often, indeed, the middle way is the right way; that is, the avoidance of either extreme will be the right line of belief and conduct. For example, we must neither carry our notions of Church-government so far as to un-church all who do not enjoy the same advantages as ourselves, nor sink them so low as to hold it a matter of indifference what form of government may be adopted in a Church. Nor whilst we teach the general necessity of the Sacraments, and guard against any lax view of their importance, must we regard them in such a way as to hold, that *without them* there can be no salvation. In such points as these our Church wisely keeps clear of extremes, and in doing so leads us in the middle way, the way of truth and right. The truth, however, here is, as in morals. It is not the middle way that is always the right way; but the right way is the middle way.

I speak of the interpretation of the Articles in the

first instance ; because in using them as a guide and index to our theological inquiries, we must be careful, above all, not to *sophisticate* our guide—we must understand them plainly, according to their direct import—or we shall be, in fact, only following our own imaginations, instead of humbly availing ourselves of their instruction and guidance.

For my part, I know of no reference which we are entitled to make for the understanding of the Articles but Scripture itself. We have heard it said lately, that the Articles can only be received so far as they are consistent with the teaching of the Catholic Church—that, being the offspring of an un-catholic age, (as the period of the Reformation has been disparagingly called,) they must be construed according to the tenor of their reception and sanction by the supposed more catholic spirit of a subsequent period, and not in the sense of the reformers and framers of them,—not, consequently, in their own original and proper sense. To assert this, is to abandon altogether the guidance of the Articles, and to substitute each man's own glosses, or modifications of the doctrines contained in them, for their simple declarations. For the Articles clearly give us but one criterion of sacred truth. They do not say, that whatsoever is not catholic, whatsoever has not universal consent in its favour, is not to be thought necessary, or required of any one to be believed, in order to salvation ; but only what is not read in Scripture, or proved thereby.

By the test of Scripture, accordingly, they are themselves to be tried. If they may be proved by Scripture, they must be held true by those who acknowledge them, independently of any other criterion. And as those who did not regard them as answering to this test would not be justified in professing an assent to them; still less could any persons honestly declare an allegiance to them, who should regard them as needing explanation from without, to bring them into conformity with catholic doctrine.

Nothing is more dangerous than this spirit of conciliation, applied to systems of doctrine. It is a stealthy and treacherous removing of landmarks, specially set up to enable men to know what is their own, and what is not. If parties had openly agreed to remove these monuments of separation, there would be nothing to complain of in such an arrangement. Thus there has been nothing wrong in the open attempts made on different occasions,—as, for example, by Archbishop Wake,—to reconcile the Churches of England and Rome. But to proceed, by wearing away the landmarks themselves, which define the territory of each Church, and gently efface the inscriptions on them, so that it can scarcely be discerned where one ends and the other begins; this is a process of conciliation which cannot be too much reprobated. Let conciliation be carried to the utmost, as far as *persons* are concerned. Let us try to make men at peace with one another, however

dissentient, however at variance. But let not principles and doctrines be subjected to such treatment. The approximation of man to man must ever be a work of charity and truth. But the approximation of truth to error can only be a hollow agreement, and confusion of truth with error.

We may be warned, indeed, by a sad experience, against so fallacious and dangerous a method of interpreting the statements of our formularies of faith. Attempts of this kind were the forerunners of the outbreak of Puritanism in Charles the First's reign, and of infidelity in the reign of his successor. There are extant at least two celebrated works by writers of our own country, though composed in Latin, for the more general use of the learned, in which there is the most studious endeavour to explain the doctrines of our Church in harmony with those of the Church of Rome. The first is by Forbes, who was appointed the first Bishop of Edinburgh by Charles the First, on his visit to Scotland, in 1623; though Forbes did not venture, it appears, to publish it during his lifetime, but left it, at his death, in the hands of a friend, to be published at any suitable occasion. This work accordingly was sent forth, as the editor avows for the purpose of reconciliation, amidst his complaints that men were misrepresenting this method of peace, and his regrets that persons were taking occasion at that time for deserting the Church of England and going over to Rome. It was evi-

dently intended therefore to keep persons from going off in the direction of Rome, by shewing how far they might agree in opinion with Rome, and yet remain members of the Church of England in profession. It is entitled *Considerationes Modestæ et Pacificæ Controversiarum, de Justificatione, Purgatorio, Invocatione Sanctorum et Christo Mediatore*: a work in one volume, 12mo. printed in London, in 1658; being described also in the title as *Opus posthumum diu desideratum*. It accordingly treats those several topics in the method of conciliation with Rome. For example, in regard to the invocation of angels, the author asserts, that the more learned Protestants do not deny that all angels generally, and those who especially take care of us in particular causes and necessities, pray for us, or that our prayers are offered to God by those angels; only they understand a ministerial, and not a propitiatory oblation of our prayers. He would substitute then advocacy for invocation—they may be “called to, but not called upon”—their names may be introduced in our prayers *ex abundanti*. And of Purgatory; he asserts the opinion of the most learned and moderate of the age to be in favour of a purgatory in which lighter sins may be removed after death, in a future life, by the intercession of the Church, but not by the endurance of the *pains* of purgatory, which he speaks of as the fiction of the Romanists. It is remarkable, too, that he distinguishes between *purgatorium quale astruunt*

Romani and *purgatorium Romanensium*, very much after the manner of the Ninetieth Tract for the Times. In the style of the same Tract, he considers throughout the statements of the Church of England as directed rather against the *abuses* of the Church of Rome, than against the doctrines of Rome in themselves. The other work to which I allude was the treatise of the Franciscan, Christopher Davenport, who assumed, on his admission into the Franciscan order, the name of Sancta à Clara, by which he is better known. He had been in youth a member of the Church of England, and a member of Merton College, but at an early age passed over to Douay, and was converted there to the Roman faith; though much of his time, as we learn, was passed afterwards in this University, where he is said to have greatly recommended himself, by his address, to the society of the place. This work was published at Lyons, in 1634. As the work of a Romanist, it was designedly undertaken for the purpose of making proselytes to Rome. It is entitled, *Deus, Natura, Gratia sive Tractatus de Prædestinatione de Meritis et Peccatorum Remissione, seu de Justificatione, et denique de Sanctorum Invocatione*, and professes to examine the English Confession, or the Thirty-nine Articles, on each of these points, and discuss its differences with respect to the Catholic faith. In the sequel, it gives a paraphrastic exposition of the remaining Articles, not included in the above. Great hopes appear to

have been entertained from it by the Romanists, as we may perceive from the testimonials prefixed to it from learned Doctors of the Sorbonne; one of which states, that the publication will be pleasing to the more moderate Protestants, and dispose them to a re-union with the Church of Rome, until the opportunity shall arrive; and in the mean time will inure in them a more reverent estimation—*publicatio operis Protestantibus moderatioribus arridebit (omnibus placere difficillimum) et ad readunationem cum Ecclesia Romana, dum opportunum fuerit, disponet, et interim reverentiolem estimationem inuret.*

The following are examples of this author's mode of exposition. On the Article, on Works of Supererogation, he premises there is no altercation at all—*nulla prorsus altercatio inter doctiores Protestantés et nos*—referring to Hooker's Eccl. Polit. iii. sec. 8, (alluding, as I suppose, to Hooker's defence against the Puritans, of the use of certain regulations and ceremonies in the Church, in addition to the positive commands of God in Scripture—which is really nothing to his purpose,) and to others, as shewing this. Then coming to the Article itself, he admits that the determination of it, to confess the truth, would seem somewhat hard, did not the subsequent words diminish the difficulty. The words he means are; that men declare, by works of supererogation, that "they do more for God's sake, than of bounden duty is required:" for that these words, if rightly ex-

pounded according to the rules of the School, mean "more than is required of them *in any way, or by any right.*" Such works accordingly, he contends, the Article condemns; and so, he adds, do the Romanists. The Article also, he adds, speaks of the works of the natural man, not of man with God's grace present to him, and assisted by it: whereas the Roman doctrine of supererogation applies to "man instructed by the grace of God." He concludes, accordingly, that the Article has nothing against works of supererogation, rightly understood. So again, in the same strain of gratuitous assumption, he concludes—respecting the invocation of saints, purgatory, indulgences, the adoration of images and relics—that the Articles do not reject these things *in se, in themselves*, but only the *Roman* doctrine about them all; that is, not what the Roman Church itself holds, but the doctrine falsely imputed to Rome, the doctrine which passes under the name of the Roman Doctrine.

I have brought forward these instances, (and a great number might be adduced to the same effect from these and other works of the same character, published about the same period,) as proofs, that the method of conciliation practised on the Articles, by interpreting them according to some extrinsic principles, and not by their own plain and direct meaning, is nothing new in the Church; and also, that no good will result from it to the cause of truth and the Church, but rather serious evil. For

who would wish to see that state of things return, when the violent counteraction to this insidious spirit of false conciliation rent the Church, and for a while established an anarchy within it; or when, after the Restoration and the re-establishment of the Church in form, infidelity and scepticism, the natural effect of the previous struggle for the mastery between the contending extremes of Popery and Puritanism, widely spread themselves through the higher classes of society, with their attendant train of immoralities. We had indeed still excellent and learned divines in our Church, who laboured to maintain the truth without compromise, and to whose exertions we are, doubtless, greatly indebted for the preservation of the sound faith of our Church to this day. But we are to look to the evil effect generally—to the mischief actually produced by such insincere schemes of accommodation—and be warned accordingly by past experience how we put ourselves in the like situation of danger to that from which, through God's providence, we have once happily escaped.

Let me then earnestly direct you to the simple study of the Articles and formularies of the Church generally, by the light of Scripture. Take them in their plain grammatical sense, and compare them with the text of the Bible. Apply them as a key to the unlocking of the treasure of divine truth there revealed, and observe whether they open that sense naturally and without force. Examine them again,

as a result collected from the Bible, and observe whether they follow by just and valid inference from a survey of the whole teaching of the Bible.

I cannot doubt that he who searches Scripture with a humble and docile mind, interrogating them throughout as they testify to the Lord Jesus Christ and Him crucified, comparing things spiritual with spiritual, by a large and accurate induction; availing himself of every help and guide for understanding of the same from human sources, and still more especially from the counsels of God's Holy Spirit, sought by devout prayer and active conformity to the will of God in Christ; I cannot doubt, I say, that one thus investigating Scripture will end his researches in becoming, at least in all material points,—and supposing him to have no strong antecedent prejudices against our doctrines,—a sincere member of the Church of England, as it is defined in the Articles and formularies of the Church, upon immovable scriptural conviction of their truth and value. It is obviously quite out of the compass of one, or even of a few Lectures, to enter into such an examination of the Articles, as I here prescribe, by the light of Scripture. I consider it enough for my present purpose, that I direct you to such an examination, as the only proper method of satisfying the conscience of each, whether he be a true member of the Church or no. No glosses on the text of the Articles, no extrinsic principles of interpretation of them, can suffice for this point.

They can only end in producing ultimately disquietude of mind in the individual, and laying a snare for the consciences of others to whom the example may recommend itself.

This then is the first and chief business to be undertaken by every one, in order to the right study of Systematic Theology. Here then I may propose for your assistance, in carrying on such a study, (I am speaking to the junior members of the University,) the use of such works as Barrow and Pearson on the Creed, and Burnet's Exposition of the Thirty-nine Articles.

For let it not be supposed that when I speak of taking our system of theology, as stated in our formularies, in its simple and direct sense, and thus studying it by the light of Scripture, I mean to exclude all subordinate investigations of them, as unnecessary for their due understanding. It is necessary, certainly, that the history of the Articles should be particularly inquired into.

Though in their fundamental nature all Articles must be regarded in the light of a summary of Christian truths, or compendious statement of the main principles of Christian belief and conduct, yet they are found to have been called forth by particular occasions; as our Articles were by the needs of the Church at the time of the Reformation. And these occasions consequently impress on them a peculiar character; giving them, as is the case with our Articles, the form, for the most part, of a protest against

errors, and directing them to points of doctrine then immediately brought into controversy.

Hence the history of the Reformation, and a study of the controversies agitated at that time, are necessary for understanding the form which our Articles have taken; to know, that is, why they advert to this or that point especially, and employ this or that particular expression; and this inquiry accordingly must be superadded, in order to appreciate them rightly. It is necessary, in fact, as an accompaniment of the fundamental investigation of their nature, as equivalents and representatives of the truths of Scripture; that we may study them throughout, both as to their substance and form.

There are, indeed, four points of view under which the Articles must be considered, in order to be fully investigated:—

1. As a system of Theology, they aim at a precision of statement beyond that of the Scriptures themselves, and employ therefore peculiar or technical terms; that is, terms either invented for the purpose, or taken from common use, and restricted to a peculiar theological sense. It forms, therefore, a part of the study of the Articles to investigate the nature of these terms, to trace their origin, to investigate their meaning, and illustrate their application to the truth expressed by them. This is that branch of the study of which I have attempted to execute a portion in my Bampton Lectures.

2. As the Articles state particular truths, or deny particular errors, it is necessary to be acquainted with the history of the Church, and in particular with the controversies agitated at the time of their formation, and the circumstances under which they were framed and ultimately left to the Church in their present form, that we may have a just comprehension of their character.

“It is much to be regretted,” says Archbishop Laurence, “that those who have, either professedly or incidentally, written upon our Articles, have not bestowed that particular attention upon the history of their compilation which the subject itself seems to require, the scope of every attempt having rather been to discover what construction peculiar expressions would admit, as applicable to the favourite controversies of a more recent period, than to determine their sense by ascertaining the sources from which they were primarily derived.”¹

On this department of the inquiry I would earnestly recommend to your attention the Bampton Lectures of Archbishop Laurence, to which I have just referred. In these he shews, most convincingly, how those particular Articles, which are by some regarded as Calvinistic, were not in fact framed with any view to the tenets or peculiar views of Calvin, who had not at that time risen to the celebrity which he afterwards attained; but were expressly directed

¹ Bampton Lectures, p. 30.

against theories taught in the Church of Rome on those points, and were founded in their mode of expression on the suggestions and phraseology of the most moderate of the Reformers—Melancthon. Our Articles, in fact, when fully examined, will be found to be strictly *Protestant* here as on other points; and the work of Archbishop Laurence tends, by its evidence, to establish the conclusion deducible from other Articles, (more ostensibly Protestant in form than those which are the subject of his work,) that our Church can consistently have no agreement with Rome in doctrine.

3. As, again, whatever may be their mode of expression, or whatever their character as a code of doctrine, they contain nothing but what may be either read in Scripture or proved thereby, the inquiry still remains as to their scriptural truth. It is further to be shewn how they embody in their statements the same truths which we read at large, and in their unscientific form, in Scripture itself.

4. As the Articles are a test of sound doctrine in those who are either employed in the ministry of the Church, or admitted to certain privileges in its communion, and a symbol of Church-communion generally to all members of the Church, it must further be investigated what their nature is as a test and symbol of religious profession, and what their obligations are on us under this point of view.

Here come to be considered such questions as the

following :—Whether the Articles are to be regarded as terms of agreement in doctrine, or merely as terms of peace ; whether, that is, a person in accepting them, or subscribing to them, affirms all the propositions contained in them to be assented to by him, or merely that he will not write or speak against them ; whether they may be assented to or subscribed with any reserve or qualification,—such as, so far as they are agreeable to Scripture, or to the teaching of the Catholic Church.

The present times seem to demand that I should more explicitly call your attention to this head.

If the principles be just which I have already advanced in the former part of this Lecture, there will be little difficulty to us in deciding on our views and line of conduct, in regard to the several questions referred to under this head.

If no extrinsic principles of interpretation are to be admitted, it is plain that no subscription to the Articles can be honest and true, which falls short of an assent to the doctrines contained in them, or which is made with any reservation.

With respect to the first question, whether the Articles admit of being regarded as Articles of peace, it can have no place, I think, with those who are admitted to teach, either in the University or in the Church. Agreeably to what I have before stated, they appear to be set forth primarily, as guides and outlines to teachers of

Christian doctrine. And what absurdity and impropriety are there not in the supposition, that such persons do not strictly assent to the propositions by which their whole religious teaching is to be guided? They are, besides, expressly set forth for the avoiding of diversities of opinion, and establishing true consent in religion.

Then, again, as to the second head of inquiry, the mode of interpreting the act of subscribing or accepting them. It is, undoubtedly, a very right principle in itself, that nothing should be received but what is agreeable to Scripture. But this principle has no place, when we come to the business of subscription. It has already had its place, and you must be supposed to be satisfied that it does apply,—that nothing has been admitted repugnant to Scripture, or not capable of being supported, so far as it is matter of doctrine, by Scripture reference,—when you come to the signing of the Articles, or in any way profess your acceptance of them. The case is *then* inverted. You *then* take up the Articles as your interpretation of Scripture,—the interpretation, that is, which, after investigation, you deliberately approve,—and you are not then entitled to return on your former ground, and say, you approve the Articles, “so far as they agree with Scripture.” For the Articles are proposed to you, as giving the right sense of the Scripture; and you are supposed, when you come to subscribe them, to have accepted them

as such. Thus Bishop Conybeare very justly observes: "The Scripture is not to be here considered as explicatory of the Articles, but our Articles as explicatory of Scripture; and therefore the Church's sense, in the Articles subscribed, is not to be determined by considering Scripture, but her sense of Scripture is to be determined by considering the Articles."^k No qualification therefore, no restriction is to be admitted, in the act of subscription to the Articles, however drawn from pious considerations of what is due to Scripture. They must then be interpreted by themselves, by the phraseology of the Church, and a knowledge of its intention in drawing them up and proposing them to its members.

What I have observed of the impropriety of subscribing the Articles with the reservation, "so far as they are agreeable to Scripture," applies with equal, nay greater force, to that other reservation, "so far as they are agreeable to the teaching of the Catholic Church." Both reservations are equally dishonest in principle; both are equally subversive of the use of the Articles as a test of religious belief. But the latter is more latitudinarian in extent than the former, for it refers to no definite standard. The Scriptures do present some definite standard, some limit to the vagueness of interpretation,—wide as that limit is, through the variety of discordant views of the sacred text. But as for what is called the "Catholic sense,"

^k Sermon on Subscription, in *Enchirid. Theol.* vol. iii. p. 526.

where is the limit to this? The Romanist claims it for his own Church. Some again claim it for the Fathers of the fourth century. Some again regard that as Catholic which excludes all peculiarities of belief,—which includes every variety of religious profession. Where then is any one standard to be found like that of Scripture, to which the several interpretations, falling under these different notions of what is Catholic, may ultimately be reduced? The very standard of reference is shadowy and uncertain. The principle then is right in itself—that what is true in doctrine is Catholic; just as what is true in doctrine is scriptural. But we must say of it, in like manner as we observed of the Scripture-reference, that it has no place *here*. The Articles are themselves the interpreters of what is Catholic. When we come to subscribe them, we have decided that they are Catholic. And (as in the other case) we have nothing to consider at that point, but what is the true meaning of the words and propositions, and what the intention of the framers.

But I need scarcely enlarge further on this point, as I may refer you to a Sermon of Dr. Elrington, the Regius Professor of Divinity at Dublin, in which he shews the identity of principle between those who are now advocating a so-called catholic interpretation of the Articles, and those who, sixty or seventy years ago, petitioned for a relaxation from subscription, on the alleged ground that the Articles were

required to be signed in "such sense only wherein they are agreeable to Scripture." The arguments of both classes, he justly observes, "are precisely similar. Both assume a standard by which they are to regulate their own opinion of the Article, and both are equally ready to confess that the interpretation they adopt is not the obvious one to be derived from the words of the formulary."¹ "The answer to both is the same," he adds. "The question is, not how far the Church follows Scripture or Tradition, or how far she is guided in her interpretation,—but what is the sense she has affixed to Scripture." I would recommend, however, the attentive perusal of this Sermon to all present,—to the members especially of my class.

In conclusion, it only remains for me to say, that I am not calling others to a strictness which I do not impose on myself. I trust I may confidently appeal to the experience of myself, which I have given during my occupation of this chair, now for a period of more than six years, and to my whole conduct in the administration of my office, that I have faithfully and diligently taught the doctrines laid down in our Articles as they are simply read, without diminution or extenuation, or any accommodation whatever. Without arrogance I feel that I can assert this, for I am only setting forth my simple endeavour to discharge a plain duty to the best of my ability.

¹ Sermon. pp. 17, 18.

I may appeal (and I say this not without serious and humble thought of my own responsibility) to the Searcher of hearts, whether I have not conscientiously laboured to approve myself as a Professor of the true Scriptural faith taught by our Church, and embodied in her formularies.

I have formed no party around me. I have not studied to proselytize any. I have stood alone, except so far as my teaching might associate me with other members of our common faith and common Church. Look to those by whom I am opposed. There you see a compact body, understanding each other, ready to act with each other, to join their names and their hands at the first signal from their leaders. Look to my case, on the other hand. I make no boast of it; for I have only acted in a way which my feelings as well as my duty have led me. I have quietly gone about the functions of my office. Some may say I have been comparatively silent in it. But I have not been silent *in my place*. Nor have I shrunk from the labour and responsibility of publishing what I thought proper from time to time. But I have formed no party. I have given no name to any followers. Then, I pray you, test me by this criterion, and test my adversaries too. And you will then readily discern who are the disturbers of the peace of the Church—who are the innovators—who are the persons to be suspected and feared.

I would that you could call before you the many

hundreds of this University who have attended on my Lectures during these six years, and ask them what doctrine I had taught them. They would tell you, I am sure, with one voice, (unless haply the seductive spirit which is now so actively at work among our junior members has drawn off any to partial, sectarian, miscalled Catholic views,) they would tell you, that I have ever spoken to them with affection and reverence of our own Church and all that belongs to it; that I have trained them, so far as I had opportunity and means, in the paths of their forefathers in the faith—the reformers, and confessors, and teachers of that pure branch of the Catholic Church planted by God's providence and grace in this country. I have courted no popularity by affected liberality. I have not presumed to give away God's truth, over which I had no liberty—no power, but one simply of custody, and stewardship, and dispensation to the household of Christ. I have certainly indulged charitable sentiments towards those who differ from us, however widely. I have not construed the Scripture so as to justify me in hating those who hold a different creed, as if they were necessarily haters of God. But I have not been liberal out of that which is not mine to give away. I have not confounded the notion of sincerity in the individual with the attainment of Truth. And in conceding, accordingly, the merit of integrity of motive to those who profess to have conscientiously sought the truth and yet missed it, I

have not conceded the truth itself. I have held fast, and have encouraged others to hold fast, the one faith delivered to the saints, the one truth consigned to the Scriptures. I have in no sense been the advocate of indifferentism, or lost sight of the oneness of truth.

It is true, that I have not ceased to warn those whom I have addressed against the Romanist tendencies of principles now so boldly propagated, both within and without this University, in spite of the authoritative censure of them, both by the governing body of the University and several Bishops of the Church. And I ought not to wonder therefore that the authors and abettors of the Tracts for the Times should be disquieted and uneasy with regard to me. It is, perhaps, only part of the common infirmity of human nature that they should wish to disparage me in my office, instead of meeting me fairly in the field; that they should passionately deprecate the untying of the band which their artifices twined around me, or rather round a branch of my office, in 1836, and leave me rather to act at a disadvantage, as they may think, against them. This is not to be wondered at. I am honoured so far by their opposition, though I regret it on their account,—deeply regret it on account of the University and the Church. I certainly have opposed what have now obtained the name of Tractarian views; and shall still oppose them,—I mean in the field of argument and of truth,—and with the weapons proper to

such a contest,—so long as they continue to infest the Church. It is not that I accuse this party so much of carrying our Church over to Rome, as of bringing the principles of the Church of Rome into our own. It is not the desertion of a regiment, or of an army, to the enemy, that is so formidable, as a civil war among the people, or the revolutionizing of a whole population. The Lacedæmonians, in their contentions with Athens, cared little for the conquest of some particular city, if they could only introduce into it a mode of government, ἐπιτηδείως σφίσιν αὐτοῖς, conformable to their own polity. And the introduction of such alien principles was the sure prelude to the alienation of the people. If our Church be leavened with Romanist principles, there will be little need to the enemy of any actual transition into their camp.

But in opposing them, I am not opposing Catholic truth, but upholding it. I am defending the Catholic truth, inherited from our immediate fathers in the faith, the Reformers of our Church, and, through them, from the Apostles themselves. They have chosen to take up some of the worst corruptions of Romanism, paring away their glaring deformities, and to stamp these with the name of Catholicity; and then endeavoured to maintain their position in the Church, by arguing the approximation of our Articles to the Decrees of Trent. Against so un-catholic, so insincere a method of teaching, I shall ever strenuously contend. And I must

expect therefore to encounter the hostility of an ambitious aspiring party in the Church—a party now fostered into considerable strength by the too indulgent regard which they for a long time obtained, and the officious praises heaped on them by themselves and others,—but not strong enough yet, I trust, to overpower the sincere part of the Church or the University, though they may distract both for a considerable time.

But though I may look for the censures and opposition of this party, I have certainly no little reason to hope for a more patient judgment now, than perhaps was possible on a former occasion, from the unprejudiced, and still Protestant members of the Church.

To them I earnestly propose a calm consideration of my whole conduct since my appointment to this chair. I ask them only to retrace for themselves what I have done, not to take their estimate of me from the studied representations of those who are and must be opposed to me. On such I may make the call to *believe me*; to read, if it were only the Sermons that I not long ago delivered before the University and have since published, and lay their hands on their hearts and say, whether those are the writings of one who does not sincerely hold the great doctrines of the Gospel, and who does not conscientiously labour to enforce them on others. I ask such to cast away all previous misconceptions; to make

allowance for former excitement; to fix their eye, not on what the invidious and censorious may hold up to them as objectionable, but on what I have always really intended, and what, I confidently trust, will ever be my intention; namely, conscientiously to profess and to "minister the doctrine and sacraments and discipline of Christ, as the Lord hath commanded, and this Church and realm hath ever received the same."^m

What avails it, that an ingenious disputant may, by artificial parallelisms, display an apparent inconsistency in any one's writings. What if he may isolate a passage from my writings, pointing it with his own conceits, with the help of his italics and startling objections; am I to be judged by another man's ingenuity, or folly, or spleen? and not by my own declaration of my intention? There are none so dull, it is said, as those who will not understand. It may be impossible to convince such persons of error, because they proceeded on no conviction of the understanding, but only on the will to do wrong to one's meaning. But it is too hard upon an author to judge him by the perverse dulness of his interpreter, where he is at hand to deny the interpretation; as I am here, now utterly to disclaim the folly and heterodoxy of my interpreter. And what must be the iniquity of a person to persevere in such interpretations, when he is positively told that he is wrong, and those interpretations are disclaimed?

^m Ordination Service.

And as to shewing forth an appearance of inconsistency, may not this be done in any case almost? Might not the infidel practise this delusion even in regard to the Scriptures themselves? Has not, in fact, one of the Tractarian writers drawn together a number of passages of Scripture, and called on the reader to observe the "startling" character of the quotations?" For my part, I am not over-anxious about the plea of consistency. Consistency in itself, further than it is consistency in right, is of no value. If I have anywhere said what is wrong, I disclaim it now. If I have said what is right, I maintain it, though it may be made to appear wrong by those with whose views it may not accord.

Such is the equitable consideration with which I may well believe I have been regarded by the presiding body of the University, who, in their concern for the interests of the University and the wellbeing of its particular members, have brought before you the recent measures; both the Statutes relative to the establishment of the additional Lectures and the Examinations in Theology, and that shortly to be submitted to Convocation. They have valued truth and right, and peace and kindness, I may say without flattery, above other considerations, above all party spirit, above all sinister constructions and imputations. I ask the candid only to follow the example thus set them by the highest authorities in the Uni-

ⁿ Tracts for the Times.

versity. I ask them only to believe, as these authorities have done, my own declaration of my firm attachment to Articles which I have subscribed, rather than the insulting representations of my opinions by my adversaries. I ask them only to inquire, as they appear to have done, into the evidence of six years' labour in my office, rather than to rest on the suborned evidence supplied by a rankling inveteracy which, most unhappy to think! not even the lapse of years can soften.

Would that myself, would that all of us here present, might as fully exemplify, in all our proceedings, in all that we do and say, our conscientious profession of the doctrines contained in our Articles. Would that those who are now so clamorous in exacting every expression of mine to their own standard,—abandoning their Catholic criterion when it suits their purpose, and substituting for it an heretical medium of vision,—had not set the evil example to the University of paltering with the sense of the Articles,—of tempting others to subscribe to them in a way by which, according to the words of our Diocesan, in his recent Charge, “the Articles may be made to mean any thing or nothing.”^o God keep me, God keep us all from this double-dealing, this secret discipline of reserve, this esoteric doctrine of subscription. It is nothing to be wondered at, indeed, that they should suspect another's sincerity, and seek a person's meaning, rather from artful con-

^o Bishop of Oxford's Charge, p. 18.

structions than from direct statements, who have countenanced by their expositions the utmost laxity of interpretation of the Articles and of subscription to them.

But you, my fellow students, and pupils in Theology, remember that I have not taught you by my Lectures, or encouraged you by my example, so to learn and profess the doctrine of Christ. I have exhorted, and now exhort you, to be single-hearted in your profession—to look neither to the right hand or to the left—to inquire simply what the Articles mean—to cast to the wind all ingenious glosses and refinements in their exposition—and thus to receive and apply to your understanding of the Scriptures and edification in all Christian graces, the whole counsel of God set forth in them: “Hold fast therefore the form of sound words; in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus.” “Hold fast the profession of your faith without wavering;” knowing that “a double-minded man is unstable in all his ways.” “Continue in the things which you have learned and been assured of, knowing of whom you have heard them:” and that “from children,” under the guidance of a tender and watchful mother in Christ, the Church of England, you “have known the Holy Scriptures,” and been taught to regard them as “able to make you wise unto salvation, through faith which is in Christ Jesus.”





